

From: Dan Weeks
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/25/02 8:04am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing today to express my concern with the Microsoft Antitrust Settlement. After reading through the settlement and many summaries I feel there is at least one issue which must be addressed.

According to the settlement Microsoft will be forced to share its Application Programming Interfaces (APIs). While this is good the clause demanding that any users of those APIs share their code with Microsoft is ludicrous. Forcing companies to give their hard work and trade secrets on products to Microsoft will cause two problems.

First, those companies that do give their code to Microsoft will be in the same position that caused the antitrust case in the first place, Microsoft will be able to undercut their competition and release bundled or stand-alone products that compete with the original authors, but potentially uses the original work.

Second, the amount of new entries into the market and investments in research will more than likely be drastically reduced. If companies see that Microsoft might be able to take all of their work for free then they will be reluctant to invest the time and money to develop a new product.

APIs are a central part of an operating system. If Microsoft wishes to publish an operating system as part of it's core business they should publish open APIs and be done with it. This will level the playing field and the best products will come to the top, rather than one company deciding the market and forcing competitors out of business just because it has the resources to do so.

Thank you for your time.

Dan Weeks
Harrison, New York
dan@danimal.org